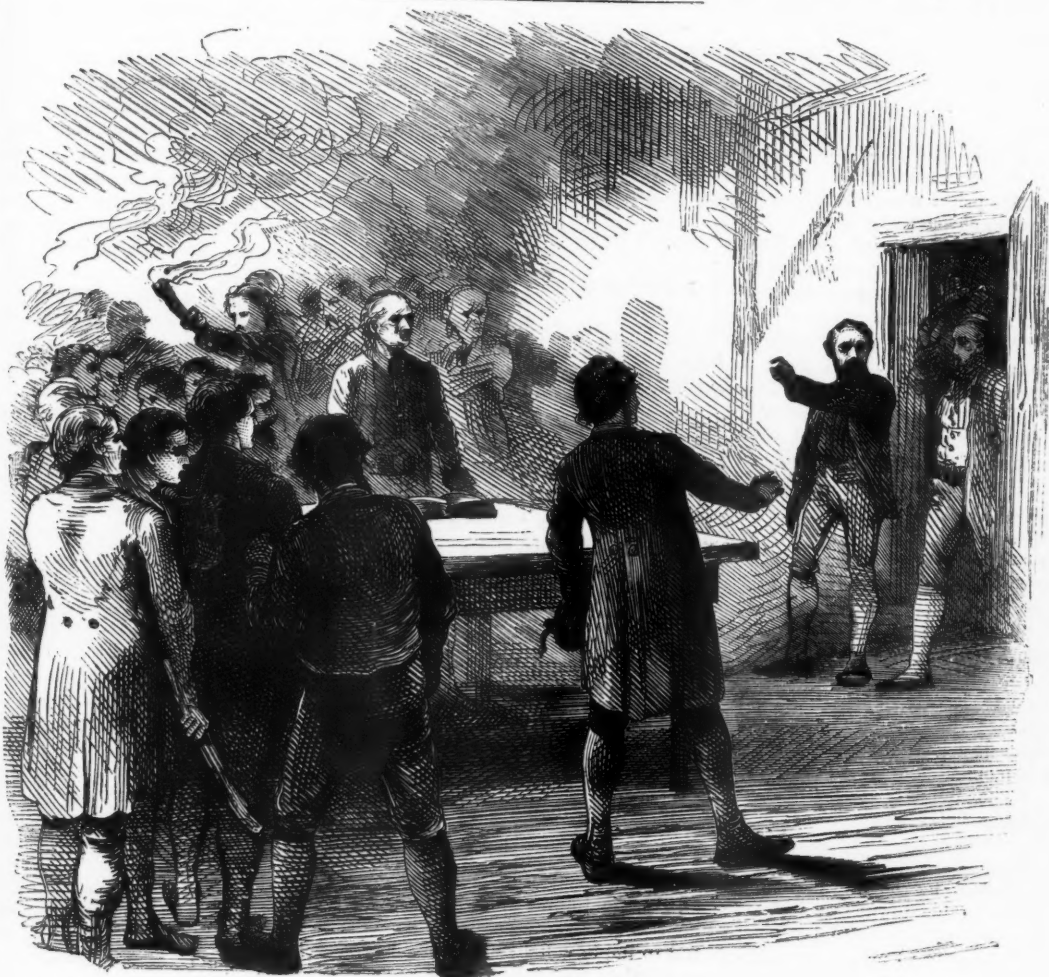


THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



THE MEETING INTERRUPTED.

THE EXILES OF SALZBURG.

CHAPTER XI.

ABOUT ten months afterwards, in the latter part of the autumn of 1730, a knocking was heard at Peter's door. "Come in!" cried he, without looking up from the book with which he was whiling away the time, and which contained some very beautiful wood-cuts of the seven wonders of the world.

With hat in hand, Hans Weinleidtnr stepped into the room, his countenance expressing timidity blended with cheerfulness.

"What art thou bringing, Hans?" said Peter, squinting at him.

"The best respects of father and mother Manlicken, as well as those of my——" "Wife," was upon his tongue, but he restrained himself as though he had not actually married a wife. After a little hesitation, he added, "My Barbara, and also——" here he again paused, "another father."

"What other father?"

"Myself," replied Hans, bluntly, and blushing with joy, whilst he twirled his hat round his hand like a potter's wheel.

"Aha! is it a boy or a girl?" said Peter, showing genuine satisfaction.

"It is a boy," said Hans, simpering.

"Is the little one quite well? What name wilt thou give him?"

"Peter—thy name," replied Hans.

"Pho! by no means do that. It might shame the boy to bear resemblance to me. Why hast thou called him after me? Didst not thou recollect that I was lame, squinted, and had a shock of red hair?"

"Certainly not," protested Hans. "We remembered only 'the good Peter,' whom we have to thank for everything."

"Ah! do not mention that. Hast thou chosen the sponsors yet?" inquired he.

"Yes," said Hans. "We have chosen two, and thou wilt be the third."

"Very well," sighed Peter. "But who are the other two?"

"Manlicken and his wife."

"Better and better still; all of the family. But I fear that the priest who once refused to marry thee will also refuse to christen the child."

"He has done so," said Hans, "though to please Barbara I have been entreating him to do it."

"Then what dost thou now intend to do?" inquired Peter.

"We must have a private christening at home," said Hans, thoughtfully. "I have a little book of the Reverend Doctor Luther, called the *Smaller Catechism*."

"I know it well," said Peter.

"In this book," continued Hans, "there is an exact account of the manner in which a child is to be baptized. So I will christen my boy myself. The smith at the Hutan has done the same: and the priest, who would have allowed my child to grow up a heathen, will have to answer for it. What I may want in the form of ceremony I shall make up for by excess of fatherly love."

"Hans!" said Peter, deeply moved, "thou art a good fellow, and as judicious as if thou hadst seen as much of the world as myself. If that odious Father Grinselm were to have baptized thy young one I do not know whether thou wouldst have had me for a godfather, so much do I hate the miser; but as it is I am ready at any moment. What time hast thou fixed upon?"

"The Sunday after next," said Hans, who now, bidding Peter farewell, hastened back to Barbara and their little son.

Manlicken, however, soon disturbed the happiness of the family by the information that he and twenty-two others of his townsmen had resolved to go to the Emperor at Vienna, to lay before him the complaints of the oppressed people of Salzburg, and to implore his intervention in their behalf. All they required was to enjoy the free exercise of their evangelical faith, which the Treaty of Westphalia granted to every one in the German empire, or else to obtain permission from him to emigrate into some other country.

"Do not try to dissuade me from it," he said to Catherine, who was in tears. "It is a sacred and noble duty, to which I am appointed by sixteen hundred and fifty souls of this district alone, who are crying out for help. Did not Moses, for a similar reason, once forsake his peaceful home? Thou fearest danger for me, imprisonment, or even death; but may not death surprise me also in my bed—in the bosom of my family? Have I not already suffered innocently? God's will be done," ejaculated he. "Besides, I do not leave thee helpless. Are there not eight arms, large and small, to labour for

thee? Is it not so, Barbara, Joseph, Hans, Frank? Thou wilt all act in my stead towards thy mother? Cease weeping, and smile as I do, although I think the smoke does make my eyes smart a little."

And truly, though he did force a smile, it was in the midst of tears which he endeavoured to hide. He then took leave of his family, and departed from the cottage, unaccompanied and unburdened, on account of the spies who were about. In the same manner his associates, twenty-two in number, stole singly across the frontiers, in confident hope that they should be out of all danger when once they stepped upon Austrian territory.

CHAPTER XII.

THE moon, in her last quarter, was gradually sinking behind the mountains; brightly shone the stars in the deep blue vault of heaven; darkness and peace rested on the valleys in which the cottages, with their inmates, lay hushed in still repose. Here and there a solitary linnet was twittering his melodious song; the graceful deer were timidly reconnoitring from the outskirts of the forests, before venturing to descend into the cornfields, which waved in full luxuriance in the plains beneath. The quiet landscape, however, was not so entirely destitute of human life as it at first sight appeared. A number of men, forming a long dark file, stepped barefooted along the narrow path which wound by the bank of the torrent rushing impetuously between the mountains and valleys. They were carefully seeking the soft grass, that their progress might not be betrayed by any sound which might rouse the slumbering cottagers. From many a ravine and from many a mountain they were joined by similar processions, all having the same end in view. In this manner, perhaps, the Swiss might formerly have united when they determined to break the yoke of Gessler. A similar act it was the intention of these plain and simple people of Salzburg to achieve: it was only so far dissimilar that the difficulty was still greater, it being a spiritual yoke that they sought to cast off.

"Perhaps the holy father is studying," whispered one of the men to his neighbour, as he pointed to a window feebly lighted, which belonged to a large building, in the vicinity of which they used redoubled caution.

"Hush!" muttered the person, placing his finger on his mouth in token of silence.

Thus they proceeded for some distance, continually augmenting their number by new comers. At length they arrived at an isolated house built on the declivity of a mountain, and to all appearance deserted, which received the travellers within its gloomy gate. But in the interior a brilliant light, which was prevented by shutters from being visible outside, welcomed the guests upon their entrance. The spacious parlour, which was crowded to excess, resembled a beehive, filled with the dark forms which dared only converse in whispers.

At last a side door opened, and an aged man of a most venerable appearance entered, carrying a Bible under his arm. Great calmness and evident contentment, the result of religious conviction, were visibly impressed upon his countenance, as he, in a quiet and friendly manner, passed through the multitude to a small space which had been cleared for the purpose of worship, and there placed himself in an elevated seat. Having laid the Bible upon a table placed there for the purpose, and having waited till complete silence was obtained, he began in a subdued tone of voice the following address:—

"May God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost reign in our hearts and minds! Amen."

"Amen," piously responded the whole congregation. "When two or three are gathered together in my name," saith our Saviour, 'I am there in the midst of them.' Wherefore, let us hope that he will now be amongst us, who are here assembled to praise and glorify his name. Yea, let us praise him that he hath revealed to babes and sucklings what hath hitherto been hidden from the wise and learned of the earth. Verily his Spirit manifestly resteth upon us, a flock without a shepherd—without a visible shepherd I mean—for he is the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for us. A great thing hath he done for us poor ignorant people, that he hath permitted us to know and acknowledge his holy word, in which no one instructed us, which we hardly dare read. Only in secret, one of us, here and there, could consult it in order to derive from it consolation and comfort. Outwardly we all practised the ceremonies which the Papal Church commanded. Our mouths uttered words which were foreign and repulsive to our hearts. Thus it happened: our knowledge was yet weak; our faith was yet mingled too much with the fear of man; and care for temporal things still engrossed too much of our thoughts. But the divine word resembleth truly the grain of mustard-seed, which by degrees became a large tree, under which thousands of us joyfully assembled. Vain were the efforts of our adversaries, who strove to prevent the growth of the goodly seed. Strange priests were sent into our valleys to re-convert us: curses and imprecations were showered down upon us and our faith from the pulpit. We strove to shun them, and had to atone for it by paying heavy fines. The Jesuits intruded into our peaceful dwellings, ransacking them in search of our holy books, which we hid in hollow trees, beneath a movable plank in the floor of our dwellings, and in other secret places, to conceal them from their rapacious eyes. The scripture saith, 'Lo, the devil will cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried.' In us, as of old, this text hath been fulfilled. Ye have proofs of it in Hans Lerchner, Veit Bremen, Ruprecht, in the seventy-third year of his age, and in Winter, who, although dangerously ill, was loaded with fetters, dragged a distance of some miles from his home, cast into a dungeon, tortured, and at length fined one hundred florins, for no other reason than he had been seen reading 'Luther's Family Expositor.' Eleven other persons, for a like case, after an imprisonment of four weeks, during which period they suffered hunger and cold, and other severe inflictions, were forced to pay seven hundred florins. Even our children were taught by the priests to become spies and informers against us, and were thus estranged from their parents. But for this reason, I say unto ye, be ye faithful unto death, so shall ye receive the crown of eternal life. Men of courage from amongst us have already laid our just complaints before the ambassador of the Protestant princes at Ratisbon. They have not been unheard. We may rest assured of their powerful protection. Three-and-twenty brave men are gone to the emperor with petitions signed by many thousands of their brethren in the faith; assuredly our noble emperor, Charles the Sixth, will aid us. Two more have also gone to the supporters of our faith, the Kings of Prussia and Sweden: we are anxiously awaiting their return, and the answer they bring us. Meanwhile let us seek to edify ourselves by reading the holy gospel, which is the power of God, to—"

"Hark, there is a knock!" said several voices, interrupting Antony Wallner. Instantaneously the burning torches which lighted the room were extinguished, and concealed behind the immense stove.

This done, the owner of the house called aloud from the window, on the outside of which the sounds had proceeded, "Who knocks?"

"Open the door, Rothenbacher; it is I, Nickel Strenger."

At this answer the men within again breathed freely, the torches were relighted, and the new comer heartily greeted.

The latter, however, said, almost breathlessly, "Have you heard yet what has occurred to George Frommer?"

"What has happened to him?" cried they, all together.

"Last night," he replied, "he endeavoured to make his escape from the castle of Werffen, for which purpose he broke through the iron grating of his prison, and let himself down by means of his shirt, which he had twisted into a rope."

"Well?" eagerly inquired they.

"His design was unfortunately discovered, and he dislocated his thigh by jumping down part of the height."

"Poor George!" they all exclaimed.

"In addition to all this," he continued, "the Warden was desirous of seizing by force a peasant's daughter, and not satisfied with that, wished to part the mother from her child, and make a servant of her at the castle. She is the daughter of the same Manlicken who—"

"Oh!" A sudden cry showed that Hans Weinleiden was amongst the assembled company.

"Wait a moment," said the proclaimer of evil tidings, restraining the frantic husband; "wait a little, thou hast not heard the best part of it yet. She did not suffer herself to be taken, for seizing the coulter of a plough, she threatened to kill the first who laid hands on her; and, at all events, said she would rather kill herself than part from her child. And thus at last the Warden was compelled to leave her, to the great displeasure of the priests, on whose account alone the whole affair was undertaken."

This tranquillising explanation, however, was insufficient to prevent Hans from now abruptly leaving them. In the darkness by which he was surrounded, and the anxiety which overcame him, he ran headlong against a man, who, through the violence of the collision, let go his gun, which fell to the ground. A hearty kick with his foot set Hans free from the hands which had immediately grasped him, and before his unseen foe had time to recover his gun and fire it after him, Hans had disappeared.

Loudly the mountains re-echoed the report. At this sound, together with the shouts of a number of men who had surrounded the house on all sides, Antony Wallner, with his accustomed calmness, began to appease the minds of the terrified congregation.

"Fear not, thou little flock; let us at once learn our fate, even though we should all have been betrayed."

"Open the shutters," cried an authoritative voice.

The instant the command was obeyed, three or four muskets were thrust through each of the windows, and with the click of their locks there was heard from a number of throats the rough cry, "Surrender, or you are all dead men!"

"For all that we have done," answered Antony Wallner, "we can answer to God and man. Put back the sword into its scabbard," he said to some of the more courageous, who seemed inclined to make resistance.

Submissively and without murmuring, he and thirty-three of the most prominent of the assembly suffered themselves to be bound, and were thus conducted to the castle of Werffen.

The rising sun found the remainder still assembled—undetermined, giving and rejecting counsel. There were many who advised having recourse to force, others to money. As soon as the report of this act of violence was known, many more of the inhabitants, who were bound together by the tie of the same faith, and conscious that the danger of the prisoners was also their own, assembled together to consult upon the best means of securing their safety. The house was now filled with a multitude of brethren of the same religious faith. Some rash and intemperate persons, heated with zeal, inflamed their discontent, and immediately weapons were grasped with the intent of opposing force to force. The multitude had already begun to move towards the castle, when the arrival of two travellers covered with dust occasioned a delay.

The names of Peter Heldensteiner and Nicolas Forstreiter passed from mouth to mouth. Many a powerful hand grasped those of the new comers in token of welcome. As a foaming cataract which, having abandoned its rocky bed, gradually losing its tempestuous rage, is seen flowing gently along, murmuring between alder-trees, so did the wrathful tumult of the multitude now subside into perfect stillness.

"Relate, relate," cried a number of voices. The two men nodded assent, and repaired to an eminence, around which all the people arranged themselves.

"We were in Ratisbon," began Heldensteiner, whose powerful voice proclaimed him to be the present orator. "There is much writing backwards and forwards on our account among the Protestant ambassadors; but nevertheless our sovereign does what he pleases, and not what is right and just, according to the articles of the Westphalian peace. We therefore thought it best to betake ourselves at once to an upright master. In Cassel we related our business to the Swedish ambassador, who, every time we saw him, expressed his willingness to provide for such of us as were skilled in iron works, mining, and smelting. But as that would not suffice us, we therefore proceeded to Berlin, to the great Frederick William. The people there must have heard strange things of us. They could hardly believe that we were Christians. In the first place, we were obliged to submit to a long catechising before two spiritual chiefs or metropolitans, whom they call provosts. We may well remember their names, Roloff and Reinbeck, for they almost tormented us to death with their questions: as, for instance, in how many Gods we believed; whether we had acknowledged Christ; if we knew the principal articles of the Christian faith; and what books we had. We were much put to it, to be sure, but we did not remain in their debt by the answers we gave. At last, when they found us so well versed in the scriptures, they became quite friendly, and did us great service; for they procured us admission into the king's presence. We were not only permitted to see his majesty, but even to speak to him."

A burst of glad astonishment now arose from the quiet and attentive audience; a joyful murmur like the bubbling up of a fountain was heard throughout the assembly, who again turned with deeper attention to the now envied Heldensteiner.

"Yes," continued he, his bosom swelling at the recollection—"yes, the mighty monarch who reigns over millions more subjects than our prince-archbishop, spoke to us poor men. At first, to be sure, we were quite dazzled and bewildered. But then he encouraged us in so kind a manner, and put so many questions to us, that at last we quite lost all feeling of awkwardness, and answered him fearlessly. The good king—God

bless him for it!—told us, when he found that we were honest people and true Protestant Christians, that if we were compelled to abandon our native country, he was willing to receive us all, and to grant us lands, cattle, and habitations. That is what the good king said."

Tears of joy now moistened many a furrowed cheek, and blessings were invoked upon so gracious a monarch.

"But," began one of the assembly, "shall we find our mountains and Alps in Prussia? What sort of country does the good king govern?"

This question was so deeply felt in the breasts of all present, that every look was directed in anxious expectation to the lips of the interrogated. All eyes followed those of Heldensteiner, as the latter glanced around him to form in his mind a comparison between his own country and Prussia.

"Speak!" they at length exclaimed.

Heldensteiner gazed upon the multitude with a peculiar expression, and then mournfully said,—

"No, my friends, nowhere shall we again find our mountains and Alps, our valleys and waterfalls. Vast plains, extending as far as the eye can see, and covered with sand, or dark gloomy forests, constitute much of the land which belongs to the great king. Even his beautiful capital where he resides is built on a plain of this description."

The impression produced upon the assembled multitude by this answer defies description. With evident sorrow all eyes were bent to the ground. Deep silence prevailed for some moments, unbroken save by heavy sighs. Ah! they had never till now understood or felt how dear to them were the mountains of their beautiful Fatherland!

For a considerable time Heldensteiner and Forstreiter seemed to share in the grief of their countrymen. Forstreiter at length said:—

"There was a man who found a treasure that had been hidden in a field, on which he went home, sold everything that he possessed, and bought that field. Again, there was a merchant who sought for a costly pearl, and when he had found it he sold his all and purchased that pearl. We have found a treasure, and a pearl, dear brethren—our beloved gospel!—well then, let us sacrifice our all for it."

On the faithful minds of the true-hearted people this scripture parable had quick efficacy; every one felt a deep conviction of its application to themselves.

Availing himself of their present disposition, Heldensteiner once more continued:—

"Did not the Israelites of old forsake the flesh-pots of Egypt, its melons, and cucumbers, and the fat herds of the land of Goshen, and wander for forty years in the burning sands of the Arabian wilderness, in order to escape from the bondage of the Egyptians? And here, you see, is a bondage from which we would escape still more intolerable than the enthrallment of the body. Of what use to us are mountains and valleys? Of what avail are Alps and meadows where treachery, persecution, and spies beset us? As a good King Pharaoh in the days of yore showed Jacob the land of Goshen, so will the good King of Prussia grant us a land where our cattle will find green pastorage, though, alas! no Alps. Long live the good king!"

"Long live the good king!" was loudly re-echoed by all.

"Let us now await the answer which our deputation will bring from the emperor, and until then let us patiently abide the events which may happen," said Heldensteiner.

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"And Antony Wallner, and the other prisoners?" inquired the crowd.

"Let us include them in our prayers, and commend them to the protection of Him who sent his angel to free the apostle Peter from the prison of the cruel Herod."

At the conclusion of this speech the multitude dispersing, returned peacefully to their homes.

CHARACTERISTIC LETTERS.

COMMUNICATED BY THE AUTHOR OF "MEN I HAVE KNOWN."

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, THE PUBLISHER.

It has been said that since noblemen ceased to give and authors to take douceurs for eulogistic dedications, publishers have become the only patrons of men of letters. This dictum, though on high authority, I take to be sheer nonsense, as it is generally understood and glibly repeated. To ask or expect publishers to be patrons in the common sense of the word, or to say that they are so, is much the same as to call a grazier the patron of his herds, and prone to nurture them at all risks for the pure benefit of the public. Acting on this principle, publishers would soon cease to be patrons, or to exert any other useful influence in society. It is true, nevertheless, that publishers, in the way of employing their capital, do possess great power, by the judicious exercise of which they can not only essentially serve the interests of meritorious writers, but do much to promote the cause of wholesome national literature. A publisher, fairly educated, and endued with the rare gifts of good taste and sound judgment, who superadds the management of a magazine or periodical to his ordinary business, is in a position peculiarly favourable to be of service to literary aspirants, and to promote the best educational interests of the country. He has opportunities of seeing early efforts, of forming opinion of capacities, of encouraging promise, and, to some extent, of rewarding as well as fostering true merit; in short, of removing barriers which too often preclude even genius and industry from entering the tempting field of letters, and admitting the rightful votaries to enjoy "the pastures ever new."

As a leader and representative of this class of publishers, William Blackwood, of Edinburgh, was a perfect example—an example now followed by a number of London publishing houses in form, and it may be in spirit. Like Old Cave, in the "Gentleman's," so many years ago, "Old Ebony" was always on the alert to advance the progress of "ma (my) magazine." He gave cordial encouragement to the first essays of writers, who have since risen to great eminence; and whom he once adopted he never deserted, but stood a steady friend through good report and evil, till time should more or less confirm the justice of his appreciation. On the retrospect it must be allowed that his critical acumen was of a high order; and whether as the introducer to the world, or cherisher in their career, of such authors as Pringle, Galt, Lockhart, Wilson, the "Ettrick Shepherd," Samuel Warren, Dr. Croly, Moir (Delta), Caroline Bowles, Maginn, Aytoun, Alison, and many more, including the great Wizard himself (notwithstanding his furious letter and passionate tiff with the publisher for daring to criticise his "Black Dwarf"), he largely encouraged talent, and struck out valuable paths in national literature.

I abstain from notice of the questions of acrimony, personality, lampoon, or other vices alleged against the Magazine by controversialists on opposite sides; much

of it was the language common to all parties in those days of "pot and kettle," when people were really more in earnest than they are now. We gladly acknowledge a better tone in the press, and that there are far fewer outbursts of foul words, misrepresentations, and violence. For this we must be thankful. The system of abusing adversaries has happily been moderated, and we can no longer truly say of the upper sort—

"Scold answers foul-mouthed scold,
Bad neighbourhood I ween."

But I have penned this introduction not to discuss literary points, but to exhibit something of the character of the individual, as it accords with his correspondence, as he pushed forward with his hobby—for such it was. It was not mere trade. He was strong and honest in his opinions, and indefatigable in giving effect to them. Outspoken and independent, he had no rancour, and only very short-lived resentment, against opponents; and to "ma contributors and friens" he was friendly to the extreme. Yet there are so many rather private matters in his letters that they can very imperfectly corroborate my view of his character. His interest (nothing sordid) in the success of the Northern press was always wide awake.

Edinburgh, 21st Dec., 1824.

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you an early copy of the new number of our friend Brewster's journal. I hope you will find several curious and interesting matters worthy of noticing or extracting. I flatter myself that you will have a favourable notice of my friend Delta's elegant volume, which I had lately the pleasure of sending you.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,
W. BLACKWOOD.

W. Jerdan, Esq.

Edinburgh, 25th Nov., 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot send off the "Magazine and Journal of Agriculture" without thanking you for the kind help you have given to "Tom Cringle." The sale, I am happy to say, has been very great, and fully justifies all the praise the work has received.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours truly,
W. BLACKWOOD.

These are but samples of his perpetual solicitude to keep moving. The next is rather curious: the "Edinburgh Review" had animadverted unpleasantly on the "Literary Gazette,"* and provoked a reply.

Edinburgh, 4th April, 1828.

MY DEAR SIR,—I congratulate you most truly upon your capital castigation of the Blue and Yellow. I never in my life read anything so well done, or that I more fully agreed with the justice of the punishment inflicted. It is really surprising that a person of Mr. Jeffrey's talents and tact should allow his journal to be disgraced with such trash of puffery. You judged well, too, in seizing upon the "Edinburgh Review" as the best way of repelling the attacks of the ephemerals.

I have the pleasure of sending you an early copy of "Mansie Waugh," with which you have already got acquainted in mags. My friend Mr. Moir (Delta), who is the author of this amusing volume, is one of the most amiable and worthy persons living, and I feel most deeply interested in the success of his book. You would, therefore, oblige me very much if you would do what you can for it. In queer, odd Scotch manner and incident, many parts are equal to Galt, and perhaps touched more delicately. I need not say, however, that if it should not please you, as it does me, I do not for a moment expect you will favour it; but if you do not like it, which I should regret, I hope you will pass it over.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,
W. BLACKWOOD.

W. Jerdan, Esq.

* N.B.—Its editor has been a contributor both to the "Edinburgh" and "Quarterly."

The drollery of this is Blackwood's charge against Jeffrey, as if unconscious of the abuse lavished on himself by the bitter political opponents of his creed in Edinburgh, and re-echoed in London. Well sung Burns—

"O, would some Power the gifts gie us
To see ourselves as ithers see us,
It would——"

What would it not do?

My next, though of a year's earlier date, shows the real interest he felt in the welfare of the "Shepherd."

MY DEAR SIR,—I am just favoured with your kind letter of 30th April. I am truly sorry that our worthy friend The Shepherd does not fall within the class to which your Society* gives pensions. If, however, great originality and true poetical genius could have given any title, sure I am there could not be so strong a case as our friend's for the Society's extending their patronage.

I feel much indebted to you for your most friendly offer of moving for a draft of £50. This, however, is a matter of some little delicacy, and though for my own part I think our friend would most gratefully accept a favour so delicately and honourably conferred upon him, yet I do not like to take it upon myself to say so. I intend, therefore, to consult some mutual friends here, and will write you in a few posts.

In another letter I find the canon of reviewing on which the Magazine was edited plainly laid down, and as it may still be deserving of attention in similar periodicals, I do not hesitate to give it a place:—

Edinburgh, 22nd Feb., 1830.

MY DEAR SIR,—I was favoured with yours on Saturday. I assure you my memory did not require a jog with regard to your friend Mr. Roby's splendid and interesting work.† So soon as I read it, I put it into the hands of one who is most capable of writing an article creditable both to your friend's book and the mag. He is, however, a person who must take his own way, and will only do things at his own time. Much, many of my own publications have suffered from being either unnoticed altogether in maga., or noticed after the proper time was gone by; but I have laid it down as a rule never to urge any of my friends to notice a book unless it is their own free will to do so, and that they can make an article which will be worthy of maga.

As to your fair friend L. E. L., I have only to repeat what I have told you with regard to Mr. Roby. All the same, you must have observed how kindly she is mentioned whenever there is incidental occasion for it.

You are too old a man of letters to mind a little nibble of an occasional writer in maga. You may rest assured that all these friends, on whom I rely principally for the support of maga., think most kindly of you, and I hope in an early number there will be an expression of this, with regard to your "Foreign Literary Gazette," etc.‡

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

W. BLACKWOOD.

W. Jerdan, Esq.

With the close of another epistle of a two years' later date, and within two years of the writer's death, I conclude:—

Edinburgh, 26th Oct., 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—By-and-by an advertisement will be sent to your publisher of the proposals for publishing by subscription our friend Allan's admirable picture of "Sir Walter in his Study." You will see what is so justly said of it in the "Noctes." A word from you goes a great way, and I am sure it will not be wanting. The advertisement is in my advertising sheet.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

W. BLACKWOOD.

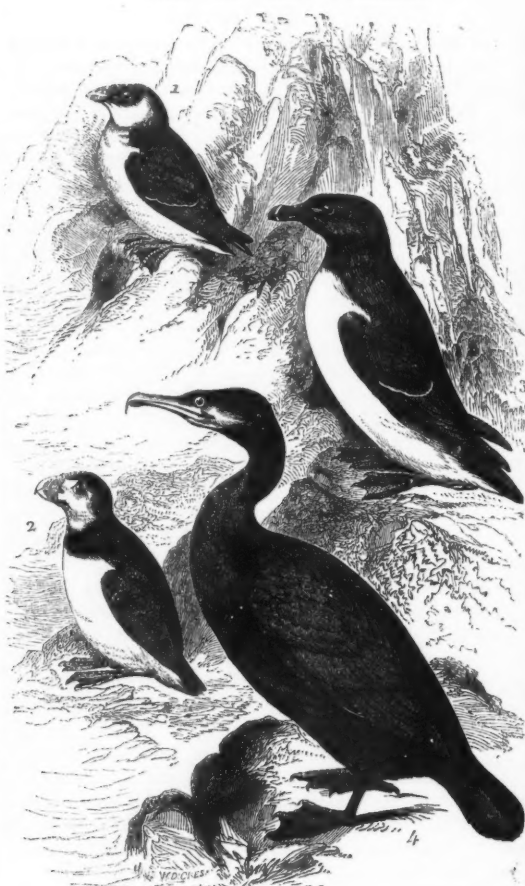
* The British Society of Literature, of which I was a zealous promoter, and long upon the council.

† My friend Roby's "Traditions of Lancashire." Poor Roby! He left a sad tradition of himself, being killed in the wreck of a vessel between the Mersey and the Clyde.

‡ Lasted thirteen weeks, and cost thirteen hundred pounds.

Here we meet with one proof of many that it was not self-interest alone which sustained the writer's unflagging activity. He was ever watchful to serve a friend as well as to advance the interests of his magazine. If we look back upon his era it must be acknowledged (whilst others worked worthily and well in the same direction) that the renown and profit of Scotland were far and wide extended by the impulse given to its press by William Blackwood.

A TRIP TO AILSA CRAIG.



1. NOCTES. 2. PUFFIN. 3. RAZOR-BILL. 4. CORMORANT.

EVERY tourist in Scotland, and every reader of Scottish story and song, is familiar with the name of Ailsa Craig. Every naturalist also knows that this huge basaltic rock is the haunt of countless sea-fowl, and especially of the gannet or solan goose. The narrative of a recent visit may interest the readers of the "Leisure Hour."

On a lovely evening in June, I sailed from Girvan, having obtained permission to spend two or three days on the island.

Two craigsmen, Hudon and Sandy, are on the beach waiting for us, and take my baggage up to the hut. I immediately start along the shore, if shore it may be called, for to leeward of the Craig, that is, on the Ayrshire side, is a raised heap of boulders of all sizes, piled up in alarming disorder, and forming a triangular raised beach. Happily there is a path which leads to the climbing-place, where the birds are swarming in

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myriads, kittiwake gulls, herring gulls, razor-bills, guillemots, puffins, all sporting in the water, or flying, or sitting on the ledges of rock.

As I want some birds to dissect and some skins in good condition for stuffing, I ask if I may go up the face of the cliffs with the climbers. The two craigsmen and myself sally out, and walk along the path to the only place where any bushes grow, which are one or two stunted elder-trees. The ground is here very rugged; huge rocks seem hurled in confusion, of many tons weight, and moreover so sharp and slippery as to require very great caution in walking. And this is the commencement of the breeding-place of the sea-birds. High up above us on the cliff the razor-bills, puffins, and guillemots are sitting, and I am very eager to see their haunts. The climbing here is over the tops of the basaltic pillars and along ledges about a foot wide, with nothing to take hold of; but rubbing my stockings in earth helped me a little.



HEAD OF PUFFIN.

The nets are not unlike herring nets, long and tanned, but with rather larger meshes. I can see the birds struggling in them, and a few cool and cautious steps bring me within reach of them. Three or four puffins are struggling in the meshes with their red sharp beaks picking at the net, and entangled in a curious manner.

I sit down beside them and clutch hold of a puffin, which gives me a sharp snap and draws blood. I catch the next round the neck and extricate it, and as its plumage is unsullied it proves a good specimen. Climbing to some more nets, which are simply spread over the rocks, and secured to the debris of rock on which the puffins roost, there are, in the craig parlance, several "strannies," or razor-bill auks. Having secured several in good feather, and collected out of the other nets the birds which twine themselves in the meshes so that it is difficult to extricate them, I have leisure to look around me.



HEAD OF RAZOR-BILL.

The rocks here are piled one over the other in great disorder; huge pieces, tons in weight, are just on the verge of the precipice, and around me the rocks are like basaltic columns in regular pillars, save where frost and damp have detached portions. The rock is of a fine grained basaltic texture, and takes a fine polish. It is largely used for making curling stones. The Craig is rented from the Marquis of Ailsa for that purpose, and for the sake of the sea-birds' feathers, the birds being sent to Girvan and surrounding places to be plucked.

Climbing to a convenient spot where there is plenty of standing-room, I wait for the climber coming, and examine the breeding-places of the birds. The puffin (*Fratercula Arctica*) and the razor-bill auk (*Alca Torda*) are the two birds that breed at this particular spot, and on every ledge, or projecting bit of rock near, a demure little puffin sits, quite tame, allowing itself to be almost touched by the hand without moving. They are flying past, one at a time, with great rapidity, within arm's length. The rocks around me are white with their excrement. Wherever a patch of earth is, between the shattered fragments of rock, there are the holes of the puffins.

The razor-bill auks are here in great plenty. In form and habits they greatly resemble the puffins, but they have black feet, a different shape of bill, and rather

bigger bodies. The eggs of the razor-bills and guillemots are exceedingly large for the size of the bird, and taper to a point so that they shall not roll off the narrow ledges. There are great quantities of razor-bills' eggs within arm's reach. The egg itself is generally of a whitish ground, very variously spotted and blotched; in some eggs there are thousands of minute specks of a deep brown, in others big blotches of a rich sienna, or speckles of a dark umber brown. Great quantities of the eggs were *clocked*, as we say in Scotland, i.e., added, or half hatched.

The divers, owing to their legs being placed so far back, almost close to the tail, have a peculiar odd way of standing straight upright. A row of these birds standing on the narrow ledges looks rather grotesque.

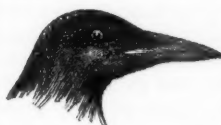
But, meanwhile, I see the climber, after visiting the other nets, tie the *paties*, or puffins, in bunches and leave them down. Owing to the projection of the rock, as the part which I now stand on is overhanging the sea, I do not see them fall, but they do fall into the sea, and the other craigsmen picks them up in the punt. Having cautiously descended, we return to the hut and rest.

We now walk along the path to where the ascent begins. On all sides save one the Craig is surrounded by steep precipices, which are almost impossible to climb. Climbing up the steep path single file, we reach the ruined castle, which is a square tower having several apartments, and a winding stair leading on to the roof.

It requires cautious walking, as the stones are loose, and the path is a mere wild goat's track, leading close above the edge of the precipice. Where a hollow runs down to the Barrhead, or edge of the precipice, is a terrace of rock, which it is easy to climb; so taking off my boots, and strapping my vasculum (botanical box) tight on my back, I go cautiously. The ledges are white with kittiwake gulls, and their nests are scattered all about the ledges. The beautiful birds are sitting on their nest as I approach, and allow me to come almost within arm's reach without flying away, and then the poor kitties rise in a body and hover round me, brushing past my face, and uttering their peculiar cry, "Kittiwake! kittiwake!" Great quantities of nests are within reach. The nest is generally built on a little ledge, or where a tuft of moss grows, and often they hang to the side of the rock, like swallows' nests under the eaves of a cottage. The eggs, which are generally three in number, are of various colours, but generally the shade is light brown, or stone colour with dark markings of brown.

The rock birds and gulls are swarming in immense numbers on the rocks as we approach, and they seem not in the least frightened as I climb up among the rocks, being seldom disturbed here.

Being satisfied for the present with climbing, I descend to have an inspection from the water. Having rowed round the base of the precipice I have



HEAD OF GUILLEMOT.

an opportunity of observing the clouds of sea fowl on their ledges. Looking up, one seems overpowered at the immense height, and rendered giddy by the whirr of wings. On the lower rocks the kittiwake gulls breed; the guillemots resort to the ledges; and above them the razor-bills. The climber points out to me the only nesting-place of the "scarts," as he calls them, or cormorants. I see their ledge, and see with my telescope several sitting on their nests, a long way

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out of reach. Several pairs of ravens (*Corvus Corax*), too, build annually here; also a rare bird, the peregrine falcon (*Falco Peregrinus*), annually makes his eyrie on an inaccessible craig near the top.



PEREGRINE FALCON.

The boat has been carefully pulled alongside one of the reefs of rocks; the steering is very difficult, owing to the intricate passages and sunken rocks. We carefully approach the "scart" rock, a flat rock from which the cormorants dive, and which they generally fish from. Owing to the sunken rock it is difficult to approach, but as Hudon knows every inch of the place, he pulls cannily alongside. He and I jump out, and Sandy throws out several iron traps like rat-traps. These we set on the rock, to try and catch a "scart," if possible, for stuffing.

Immense blocks of rock have fallen together, and made a rude cavern of some extent, and this the craigsmen call the "kirk," but why I cannot say. Hudon shows me another way of catching the fowl: he hides behind a ledge of rock at the entrance to the kirk, and I crouch behind; he then grasps his long bird-pole in his hand, and as an unlucky "patey" or "strannie" comes flying within reach, he knocks it down with the pole.

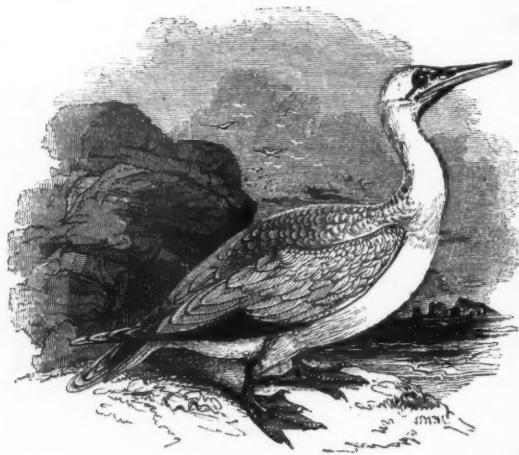
Hudon now collects and ties the birds together, and I stroll or clamber about, and go to the foot of the precipice and sit down and watch the incessant whirr of wings, and listen to the varied and clamorous cries of the fowl.

Presently the current carries the punt past the bend, and gently wafts us under the base of "Ashy Doo," and past the "scart rock," from which a dark green cormorant shoots off. We now get to the far side of the Craig, where huge precipices all along uprear themselves from the water. In some places the air is almost darkened with the flights of the birds, and the ear pained with the noise of their clamorous and discordant cries. Hudon gives a whoop, which echoes from craig to craig, and immediately the whole legion of birds leave their ledges: the puffins, razor-bills, and guillemots, with a rapid movement of their wings, plunge with the speed of thought into the sea, and the gulls, with cries, circle round our heads as thick as snow-flakes on the blast of the north wind. Whole schools of puffins and other rock birds are sporting in the sea, some with feeble cries of delight dashing the water over one another, others diving after sprats, and pursuing their prey with wings as well as feet. The kittiwake gulls do not seem to

dive so much, but lie motionless on the calm water, or poise themselves on one leg on the rocks, or sail with slow extended wings through the air.

Drifting round a projecting rock, a huge cavern opens far into the bowels of the earth, and as we approach several rock doves, wild slate-coloured pigeons, fly out. Drifting round another line of rocks, we see myriads of solan geese clustering on the ledges, and flying far up overhead; huge white or light grey birds, with their long slender wings just tipped with black.

In rowing back the fierce heat from the cloudless sun, as it shines down untempered by a breath of air, is almost suffocating; so during the middle of the day I rest on the rocks in the shade. Then, as the afternoon draws to a close, Sandy says that if I like to go up to the Barrhead he will show me the place where the "gants" breed. I accordingly take a stout staff in my hand, and, after following Sandy some distance round to the far side of the Craig, he tells me to shut my eyes, and carefully leads me to the verge of the precipice, and when I open them at his signal, the quantity of gannets is something amazing.



GANNET, OR SOLAN GOOSE.

I have never seen the breeding-place of the gannets before, and the sight and the noise almost make my brain reel. I cautiously sit down on the top of one of the pillars, and gaze long and in silence. A hollow-shaped bay or amphitheatre of rocks rises sheer from the sea about six hundred feet high or more, I should think, formed of regular columns or basaltic pillars, and on the top of each of these pillars, of which there are myriads, broken off all the way up, is the nest of a gannet, on every ledge as close as they can stick, and the noise which the thousands of gannets make passes description. Close under where I sit are several nests, and I cautiously climb down with Sandy to inspect them. A great bulky nest it is, large enough to fill a coal-scuttle with, composed of sea-weed, dried grass, moss, etc., and in each nest there is one egg. Hence, some say, the origin of the name solan goose.

But now the fierce heat is declining, as the sun is sinking in the west, and faint zephyrs gently fan my heated face. Sandy goes along the Barrheads farther, while I climb gently up the sides of the Craig; but toiling over the rocks and clambering up the precipices is hot work, and I leisurely proceed. First a sloping terrace, followed by a ridge of bare rock, then another terrace, then a low marshy sort of swamp, with

a lagoon, or wee loch, the waters of which are black with peat, but with which I slake my burning thirst. A few more trifling steps, and what a gorgeous spectacle is unfolded at my feet.

In the dim distance, faint in the gathering mist, Malin Head rises from the broad Atlantic, and then the huge bulk of Rathlin Island, and the dread Giant's Causeway, are seen darkly frowning over the waste of waters, and the very fields and villages are seen on fair Erin. The wild Mull of Cantire, and Sanda Island, with its white lighthouse, are distinctly seen under the setting sun; and one's eye ranges lovingly over the picturesque Cantire side, past Campbelton Harbour, till the land slowly sinks into Tarbert Loch. Green Islay is peeping over, with the terrible Mull of Oe, and the three Paps of Jura looking like faint and delicate cloudlets. Beauteous Arran lies at my feet, with wee Pladda sleeping at her side, with all her tumultuous and terrible crests of rock, Goath Bheima, the mountain of the winds, looking proudly around her, while Cumbray rises like a vast iceberg from the lovely Clyde and fertile Bute, past which the blue Loch Fyne wanders, till it is lost in the labyrinth of hills.

But slowly the sun is sinking in the west. Behind the mighty Paps of Jura a few faint and gauzy vapours, which before seemed ethereal as spirits, now are glowing red as fire, as they wait upon their king; the whole horizon brightens; the hills are sharp and clear and red as flames of fire; and the faint and far-off cliffs of Ardnamurchan, rosy as maiden's blush, look like evening mists, but in reality are firm as the foundation of the world. The Arran hills are tinted with gorgeous lights, one side bright and pure, the other purple and dark. The great rock throws its shadow far across the water—the water, which is, as it were, a sea of flame, brilliant yellow, gradually fading into a bright red, as flames playing over glowing charcoal, save where rugged islets rise,

"And break the spreading of the golden tide,
And fling their shadows on the pictured deep."

Here long I linger, unable to tear myself away from the lovely scene; and the last quivering ray of the sun has sunk, and slowly the rosy light pales into fainter yellow, and fainter is the glow reflected in the calm water, and the last tints have faded from the hills; though the crests are yet warm and ruddy, their corries and valleys are black as a storm at night. Ireland is slowly fading from my view, and one by one the westernmost islands pale and fade away. The daylight still lingers about the few snow-clad hills of the far north, and the horizon is still bright and lambent. But in the east, one by one the stars appear faintly flickering, like angel spirits keeping watch over the world by night, and slowly the pale crescent moon rises from the dark hills and sheds its subdued light across the calm, still water. And the cries of the sea fowl are hushed, save when a patie more wakeful than its brethren shoots past, like an evil thought across the mind.

Now one by one the lighthouses send their steady lights across the darkening water. The Cloch, Little Cumbray, Pladda, Campbelton, Sanda, and Loch Ryan, one by one shine forth bright and steady. Slowly I tear myself from the summit, and with careful and cautious steps descend in the increasing darkness.

Hudon is about to start to look for me, as he wonders why I am so late; and when I tell him I have just come from the summit, he wonders how I have found my way in the gloom.

I awake next morning at grey dawn, and hastily

dressing, sally out. It is about half-past three, and the sun has just risen over the Ayrshire hills. Already the sea fowl are astir, and are sporting and playfully dabbling in the water; a faint yet fresh breeze is blowing, the breath of the morning gently rippling the blue sea. I ask Sandy to accompany me, as he promised, up the Craig to get some choice varieties of eggs for cabinet specimens; so while Hudon is lighting the fire, he takes me up the hill, past the castle, and wading through the wet bracken, we climb the first terrace. Deliciously cool and pleasant the air is, and on every side the glad notes of the birds resound. The rock pipit (*Anthus Aquaticus*) is uttering its shrill call, and on each craig of rock sits a sedate little puffin; the curlew (*Numenius Aquaticus*) is wheeling above us, and the thrush, or mavis, strange to say, is singing blithely, and very sweet its touching strains sound, echoing among the rocks. The ring ouzel (*Merula Torquata*) is here as usual, flitting about the rocks, and scolding us for intruding near its nest. But I have no time to stay and search for it, as I want to see the gulls.

We are now approaching the place where the big gulls breed, and I see them at a distance, sitting among the ferns and on the top of the jutting rocks. First one and then another rises, and then all rise and wheel in the air, high up, on motionless wings, slowly gliding and floating as lightly as spirits. As we approach nearer, they get more clamorous, and bark like dogs. I find a nest of the lesser black-back gull (*Larus Fuscus*), and immediately after another, both with three big eggs in. Suddenly I come upon a nest with three pretty little young gulls in it, just like chickens, only with webbed feet, and curiously spotted all over like the spots on the eggs. I take one in my hand, and the two others run and hide among the rock and fern, but while I am examining my captive, the enraged old ones swoop down on me in an alarming manner. They soar to a great height, then with outstretched wings swoop down upon me, a few feet above my head, and soar the other side; then swoop down again, coming each time closer, as if to strike me, and the rustle and vibration of their feathers makes a noise as if meant to intimidate me.

But Sandy is calling; so leaving the big gulls to their airy flights, I follow after him as he leads straight to the bay of the gannets. He takes off his shoes, and I do the same, and cautiously walk over the edge of the precipice along a narrow shelf on which the gannets are breeding. The myriads of gannets are still sitting on their nests, and the males are away fishing, and now and then one comes floating from seaward towards the Craig, and I see him disgorge his fish for the sitting partner to breakfast on.

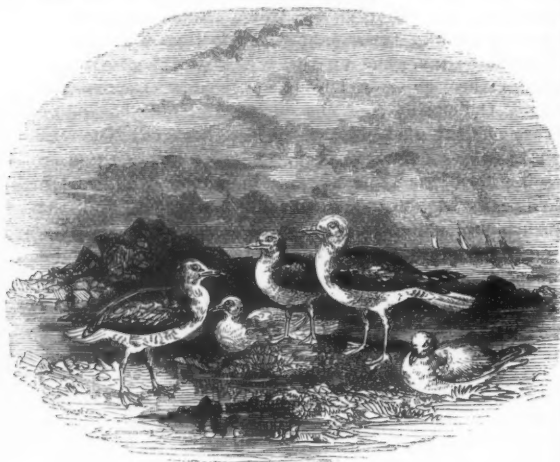
I take one or two of the cleanest eggs, as they are the freshest, and then Sandy and I come back to the glen that runs down to the Barrhead; and climbing about the sharp and rugged precipice, Sandy selects some fine varieties of the razor-bill, beautifully clouded and mottled, also a few uncommon varieties of the guillemot, and what is a prize, I see a bridled guillemot (*Uria Lacrymans*) sitting on a ledge. With some difficulty I climb to it, and find that its egg is fresh laid, which I take.

Packing the eggs carefully in my vasculum, I climb back to the top, and follow Sandy down the now more familiar path. During my absence up the hill, my boatman Rab and his laddie have arrived from Girvan, having had to row almost all the way, there being little or no wind.

After breakfast, as a puff of wind is rising which we mean to take advantage of, I pack up my treasures of eggs and specimens, my traps are placed in the punt,

and we row out to the boat, which is anchored off the Craig. Then the craigsmen give me a parting cheer as the lug is hoisted, and we slowly drift out, and I give them a parting wave of the bonnet as I leave the Craig with great regret.

T. C. W.



THE RIGHT WAY OF POKING THE FIRE.

WE have often remarked that, however modest and humble people may be in their pretensions in various arts and accomplishments, and however willing they may be to yield the palm of excellence to others, there is yet one accomplishment in which everybody invariably imagines that he excels everybody else—and that is the art of poking the fire. It is true you may not hear people express this secret conviction, but if your observation is worth a straw you may read it in their faces whenever one person in a company ventures to poke the fire in presence of the rest; and if your candour is on a par with your observation you will confess that you rarely—we might almost say never—see a fire poked without feeling, however deftly it has been done, that it still wants just one finishing touch at your own hands.

Various, indeed, are the methods of using the homely instrument whose special function it is to rouse the sleeping embers in the grate, and cause the cheerful flame to enliven the domestic hearth with genial light and warmth. Professors of chiromancy tell us they can evolve the mental portraiture of man or woman from an inspection of their handwriting; for our part, we feel confident that revelations much nearer the truth might be derived from a careful consideration of the way in which a person handles the poker. Let us look at a few of the methods most in vogue. First, there is the bold, careless, slapdash method, in which the performer thrusts the instrument between the bars without a moment's consideration of what he is about—rakes the coals this way and that for a quarter of a minute or so, and then throws down the instrument with a bang and a clang that startles pussy from the hearth-rug and sends her scampering. Still less tolerable is the persistent method in which over-earnest minds are apt to indulge, when the performer, having got possession of the poker, is loth to relinquish it, and goes on digging and picking at the fuel until his wife gets up from her chair and takes the instrument out of his hand; or, the lady being absent or failing to do that, the fire is finally poked out, and the bell is

rung for Betty to come and renew it. Allied to these two methods is a third, still more demonstrative, which may be called the savage method, in which the performer storms the fireplace as he would an enemy's fortress, deals furious blows with his weapon upon the casemated upper works of caked lumps, and supplements these assaults by fierce lunges into the very vitals of the fire, as if resolved to tear its heart out. Such are the "heroic" methods of poking, in which those who adopt them may pride themselves if they like; but we confess to a preference for more moderate measures, as exhibited in a contrary style of practice. Among the moderate methods we may mention the encouraging mode, in which the poker, as it were, pats the blinking fire on the back, just to cheer it up a little, then gently clears away the lower strata of ashes, lets a little more oxygen into the lungs of the fainting subject, and so entices it to make an effort to recover itself and show the domestic circle a cheerful face. Analogous to this is the sympathetic and cautious method, which has to be pursued when the fire is at its last gasp and would certainly perish irrecoverably were it roughly handled. In this case the operator has to use the utmost dexterity, and to exercise at once prompt action and enduring patience: he cherishes the spark by supplying fresh fuel; he makes a passage for the current of air to the exact spot where it is wanted, and with the point of his instrument he adjusts those particles of fuel which, being in a half-burnt state, are the readiest to catch, so that they shall receive, retain, and spread the combustion.

Other methods of poking the fire might be here described were it worth while; but we pass them for the present, being desirous of turning our attention briefly to another aspect of the subject, which we may be allowed to designate its moral aspect.

There is no risk in asserting that society in all ages has stood in special need of poking up, and that, morally speaking, the demand for the right use of the poker is not a whit less urgent at the present day than it was in days that are past. Men have always had to be urged, or poked up, to the performance of their duties, and in all likelihood will continue to need constant provocation to this end. The fires of love and benevolence, of philanthropy and kindness, which should be ever burning brightly in their breasts, are always getting into a low and smouldering state, and sometimes, alas! they get extinguished altogether for lack of the stoking and poking which should have been administered to them, or, worse still, because the poking has been done by rash and unskilful hands.

Now the use of the moral poker is a much more difficult matter than the wielding of the domestic instrument spoken of above. What renders it so immensely more difficult, and so often defeats the most energetic endeavours, is the fact that when using the moral poker we never know whether we are stirring a glowing fire or a mere empty grate. A man, or any number of men, may look as benevolent as Mr. Peabody or Captain Coram, and yet have no more of the fire of benevolence in the heart than there is in a lump of ice. Thus the wielders of the moral poker—the men or the women whose office it is to stir up others to good works—are always, to some extent at least, working in the dark. Such workers, however, have the consolation of feeling that they are doing the right thing; and some of them, it is pleasant to know, show remarkable skill and dexterity in doing it. The very worst methods of setting about this business are the heroic methods

foreshadowed above. Men are to be bounced and bullied and dragooned into a good many things, when circumstances are favourable to such modes of persuasion, but they are not to be compelled by any such means into a charitable frame of mind. "The quality of mercy is not strained," as the great poet tells us, and it will not stand the strain of angry, reproachful, or even of exacting pressure: if it is not allowed to drop "as the gentle rain from heaven," it is not to be had at all. If some of our habitual provokers to good works had a due appreciation of this psychological fact, we should not see the disheartening sights we sometimes see, or hear so many of the dreary complaints we sometimes hear. People go about their business in the wrong way, and then moan out their complaints because they have failed of the success they might have had by working in the right way. Conceive, if you can, a more doleful spectacle than a man in possession of pulpit or platform, and bent on squeezing charitable dole out of his audience by mere pressure of paragraphs. Like the "persistent fire poker" aforesaid, he never knows when to stop, and talks and talks, and piles up palaver on palaver, and the consequence is that he pokes out the fire of benevolence; that his audience, whom a few well-chosen words might have charmed into prompt philanthropic action, are first dinned to weariness, then to irritation, and then to resentfulness, and they button up their pockets with the feeling in their minds, that having undergone an uncalled-for scolding, they are not bound to pay for the infliction, and so they depart without giving. Dean Swift understood human nature too well to make a blunder of that kind. It is on record that having engaged to preach a charity sermon on behalf of the poor of a certain place, he took for his text the words of Solomon, "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord;" then, looking round on his congregation, he merely said, "My friends, you see what are the conditions of this transaction; therefore, if you like the security, down with your money." It was an irreverent speech, too sadly in keeping with his character, but the contributions which poured in in answer to that brief appeal were liberal beyond all previous experience in the place; and one may well believe it.

Another dean, no less witty and considerably more wise, reminds us that one result of attempts to stir up the fire of benevolence is generally to arouse a burning indignation in the breast of A because B will not put his hand in his pocket to relieve the necessities of C. This comical dictum of Sydney Smith's is tragically, frightfully true. That is the effect of the majority of appeals made to selfish humanity on behalf of their suffering fellows; so much easier is it to awaken sympathy than self-sacrifice, and so prone are all of us to slink from the obligations we should accept, and to shift them to the shoulders of others. Still it may be fairly questioned when such transferable sympathy is all that is excited, whether the exciting agent has been active in quite the right way. We are not quite sure, but we have a notion that there are ways, if we could but find them out, of enlisting not only the sympathy, but the personal assistance of most of our fellows. Perhaps the gentler methods of touching up the fire might succeed; at any rate, this seems the plan adopted by practical persons who manage benevolent institutions; they seem to go to work in a rather unsentimental way, and for the most part rely more on the influence of creature comforts than on the suggestions of duty or conscience. Thus when they want a lot of people to give generously, they get them round the

festal board and feed them first into a generous mood. We all know the results of this time-honoured method of proceeding: perhaps we are not all convinced that solid as such results frequently are, we have any great reason to be proud of them.

SAN MICHELE,

THE CAMPO SANTO OF VENICE.

THE island of St. Michele, in which is the cemetery of Venice, seems to be but little known to strangers, from the oft-repeated question, "Where do the Venetians bury their dead?" For it is pretty generally known that the nobles only, or with very rare exceptions, had their burial-places in the noted churches; whilst for the middle and lower classes, deep excavations were made in the churches of lesser note, which were called the "Tombi." To these "Tombi" the people conveyed their dead generally, each tomb being large enough to hold a hundred and more coffins, which were closely packed one on the other.

But by degrees, as the vaults in the churches became full, a talk arose as to the propriety of selecting ground for the burial of the Venetians; and as the company of the Camaldolesi monks had just at that time (1811) been suppressed, the senate took into consideration the turning of the beautiful gardens of the monastery in the island of St. Michele into the desired cemetery. The place meeting with the entire approbation of the government, the necessary works were begun, and soon the gardens which had served as a work of recreation for the monks, and were exceedingly beautiful, were demolished, and the earth levelled for the reception of the dead.

The island of St. Michele is situated at the end of the Laguna, and on it stands the church of the same name, which was built by Moro Lombardo, or Moretto, in the middle of the fifteenth century. It has an inscription to the memory of the Greek monk Eusebius, which is supposed to have been composed by Aldus Manutius.

The Camaldolesi, who occupied the monastery and church of St. Michele, were some of the most learned monks of the period, and bore great reputation for sanctity. After having held unlimited sway over the island for a period of three hundred years, the Camaldolesi were replaced by a colony of the Franciscans, whose business was to be "watchers of the dead," to see that no desecration was committed, and to wait on the funerals which arrived at the water gate of the island. This water gate is a high arched entrance from the Laguna, whence steps are cut in the sod to the second gate of the cemetery. The church of St. Michele stands nearly in the middle of the island, and is replete with interest for the antiquary in its interior decorations, and in its exterior to the lover of the picturesque. The portico of the church is supported by slight and elegant columns of white marble, and the monks have added to its beauty by causing the brightest coloured creeping plants to intermingle with roses and other sweet-smelling flowers, giving a charming grace to the old grey church. The nave is another object worthy of notice, from the delicately cut cornice of flowers which runs around it.

The Franciscans, not to be behind their predecessors, have spent a vast deal of time in making the Campo Santo as beautiful as may be for so mournful a spot, for they have made the entrance to the church look more like the entrance of a conservatory than of a temple.

Round the portico are arranged large ornamental vases filled with some of Italy's choicest treasures in flowers. The entire entrance is screened by a fine oleander, whose rose-coloured flowers receive new beauty from contrast with the glistening whiteness of the marble pillars of the portico. These flowers form a sort of frieze-work right round the church, and the monks add to their store by selling slips of them to those who wish to purchase for planting on the grave of a friend. Indeed, so harmoniously are flowers and shrubs planted, that on entering the cemetery it is hard to suppose it a place for the dead, but rather for the living, until we look around and see the mounds of earth, the crosses, and other gentle remembrances placed by loving hands above the spot where repose the loved and lost. A favourite symbol is a statue with finger pointing upwards, telling that the hope of life and immortality beyond the grave was his who sleeps beneath.

The many beautiful pieces of sculpture which adorn the church of St. Michele are well worthy of remark. The tomb of Cardinal Dolfini, Bishop of Vicenza, is one of the most remarkable, chiefly for the two figures of Faith and Prudence, which stand on either side of it. This beautiful work of the chisel was executed by Bernini. On the left side of the nave is the world-renowned group of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness; and next to it the worship of the golden calf. The grand statue of the patron saint of the island, St. Michele, was the work of Gregorio Lazzarini.

There is no doubt that Venice, and those islands which spot her lagoons, possess some of the most rare gems of art to be found in Italy. This is easily accounted for when we call to mind that the price which many of the vessels paid for being allowed to anchor in her waters, was the bringing as offerings for the embellishment of the churches anything that was rare in sculpture or painting—including, indeed, everything which could add a beauty or a grace to the city.

The precious marbles, for which the public edifices in Venice are so celebrated, are not forgotten in the church of St. Michele. Over the door of the lesser chapel is a large cross of most beautiful design, in many coloured marbles. So rich is this cross in "rare colours," that it is generally designated "the cross of the precious marbles." Near to this cross is the decorated sepulchral slab which covered the grave of Fra Paolo Sarpi, formerly in the church of the Serviti, in Venice; but when that church was desecrated it was removed to St. Michele, in 1796. The friars, as usual, jealous of the superior sanctity of any who did not belong to their own order, effaced the inscription; but they were afterwards compelled, much against their will, to restore it, by special command.

The Capella Emiliana is so gracefully beautiful in its structure, that various imitations have been made of this or that part of it in many of the churches which were built afterwards in different parts of Italy, but none of them can compare with this architectural masterpiece of Bergamasco, who has the credit of its erection, in 1530.

When St. Michele was in the hands of the Camaldolesi, they had one among their number who, although he had been with them for a long period of years, kept himself aloof from his brethren, seeming as though he were always in a kind of dreamy trance, talking and muttering to himself as he strolled among the then charming gardens of the convent. None dared to question him, for some there were in that superstitious age who deemed him one who had business with the powers of darkness, whilst others, the most

charitable, considered him mad. Whatever their thoughts, it was at last quite plain to be seen that something of more than common import filled his thoughts. This was no other than the celebrated geographer, Frate Mauro, who delighted the schools of the continent by his "Mappe Monde," which work had filled his thoughts, for his whole time was taken up in making lines, and writing on small pieces of paper, of which his pockets seemed always full; but when the effect of all this writing and thinking was shown in the beautiful and correct map of the world which he put forth, all the ill-natured remarks of his brother monks were hushed, and no praise was found sufficient to express their appreciation of his merits. The map was executed for Alphonso v, King of Portugal, and embraced all that was known in the year of its construction. At the suppression of the convent this map was removed to the library of St. Mark. It has recently been published in facsimile by Viscount Santarem, the historian of early Portuguese geographical discoveries.

The funerals which take place at St. Michele have something mournfully picturesque in their appearance. On the day fixed for the interment the procession generally issues from the late dwelling of the deceased, about seven o'clock in summer, and five in winter. This is sometimes varied by its taking place before eight in the morning. The procession consists of a company of monks, who walk first, followed sometimes by a few friends of the deceased; next comes the coffin, borne, if of a female, and young, by six young women, all in white; if of a young man, by six young men. Then come the hired mourners, who are twelve women dressed in green, with black veils. These assist in the chanting of the monks. Priests and mourners all carry long wax tapers.

When the procession arrives at the church where the funeral service is to be performed, and where the subsequent masses for the repose of the soul of the dead are to be said, all enter, and according to the means of the family so is the grandeur of the service.

When all is over, the procession retires in the same order, singing, or rather groaning, the "Requiescat in pace," and the coffin is left before the high altar all night. In the early morning of the next day the closed gondolas receive the coffin at the nearest point to the church where it has been left all night, and they then take their mournful way to the island of the Campo Santo, where the monks receive the body in solemn silence.

Not only in Venice, but throughout all Italy, the dead remain in the church all the night of the funeral, under the charge of one of the inferior clergy, and are conveyed to the cemetery the morning afterwards.

The priests will not receive the remains at the gate of the cemetery, unless the service of a special mass has been said in a church. The presentation of an official certificate of death is a proper regulation, but for very different reasons than merely satisfying the demands of the clergy. The requirement of mass sometimes leads to cases of hardship, as in the following instance, which was witnessed by the writer of this paper. Some very poor people had the misfortune to lose the stay and support of their family, and not having the means of paying for the funeral mass to be said in a church, they made up their mind to carry the coffin themselves to the Campo Santo, which was some distance from Turin. When arrived there, the requisite certificate was of course wanting. The poor bereaved wife, her children, and friend who had helped in the woeful journey, had to return with their burden, resting every now and then

on the way, where they were seen, and where with many bitter tears the tale was recounted, when a subscription was made for the required service. The Campo Santo of St. Michele is visited twice every year by a sort of committee, who see that the proper regulations are carried out, and that the ground is kept in order.

The monks, notwithstanding their mournful employment, seem a happy set of men, and are great gardeners. Some of the rarest flowers in Italy are to be had in this solemn garden, and to see their dark-robed cowed figures sitting at evening among the flowers which surround the old grey church is a sight which would charm into action the pencil of the artist.

Among these quiet brothers, even in later days, there have been those whose names are well known. It was at St. Michele that Cardinal Turla, the historian of the Venetian navigators, found time to write his very valuable work; and here the late Pope Gregory XVI, under the name of Fra Mauro Cappellari, compiled his code of criminal law.

The churches and Tombs having been for some years shut up, rich and poor bury their dead at St. Michele, and as this is becoming full of the "mounds of mortality," the Venetians must ere long find another Campo Santo.

According to the population of Venice, the mortality is less than in most other cities of the continent. From a census taken in 1862, the population was 114,000, the deaths averaging fourteen per day, or about ninety-eight in a week, and 5,096 in a year. Of these deaths the causes were various, but not so much so as in other cities. Gastric fever is the most fatal to life. Other fevers prevail during the summer months, but not contagious or fatal ones. A remarkable fact is, that consumption is scarcely known in Venice, and in visiting other lands the first care of a Venetian is to guard against it. The deaths by drowning are not so numerous as might be supposed in a water city, fifty per year being the average; but the gondolas are so constructed that it is almost impossible for them to upset. The mortality of infants is less than in most parts of Italy. The longevity of the Venetians is remarkable, about twenty of the deaths being at the age of ninety, and some live even to a hundred years, worthy successors of Cornaro. On the whole, the bills of mortality will surprise those who imagine that this city must be an unhealthy one. The waters of the lagoon render the air pure, and effectually carry away all impurities.

THE LATE RICHARD HARRIS, M.P. FOR LEICESTER.

As the traveller enters Leicester from the north, he crosses a strip of land enclosed by the River Soar and the Union Canal, called "Frog Island," which contains a place appropriately designated the "World's End." A little to the west lie the "Dane Hills," which consist of several fields bearing Danish fortifications, while to the east rise the remains of Leicester Abbey, best known now as the place where Cardinal Wolsey, fallen from his high estate, retired to "leave his bones." On the banks of this River Soar (anciently Leir), the tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the genius of Shakespeare, give local habitation to King Lear with his three daughters, there residing in rural simplicity,

"In shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads."

On this "Frog Island" there was born, in a humble cottage, in October, 1777, Richard Harris, one of those

men of the people who, by the force of great natural abilities, combined with unswerving integrity of character, raise themselves to high social position and leave their mark in the place in which they live. He was the eldest of a family of six children. His parents were respectable and industrious, but poor, and unable to procure for him the advantages of even a common English education. It happened at the very time that the Sunday-school system, which has conferred such signal benefits on the working classes, was introduced into Leicester by the Rev. Thomas Robinson, the vicar of St. Mary's, known not only for his benevolent and active spirit, but as the author of an excellent work entitled "Scripture Characters." Amongst the first scholars enrolled was Richard Harris. Thirsting for knowledge, he also sought and obtained admission into a night school, and there and in the Sunday-school he acquired the rudiments of a plain education.

At the age of fourteen, he was placed in the printing-office of Mr. Phillips (afterwards Sir Richard Phillips), who was a prominent politician of the time, as well as an author of some repute, and the editor of the "Leicester Herald." The "Herald" sympathised with the principles of the French Revolution which was then commencing. Soon after entering the office, he became the innocent occasion of a piece of mischief. One evening, just as the paper was going to press, a frolic occurred in which young Harris stumbled or was pushed against the frame in which the type was set, displacing and throwing into confusion two or three columns of it. All was dismay! What was to be done? There was no time to reset the type. The Nottingham coach was nearly due, which required a considerable number of copies. The master was called, and his ingenious mind at once hit upon the following expedient. The broken type he still further disarranged, and converted into a hopeless mess, technically called "pie." The whole received the title "The Dutch Mail," to which the following explanation was added: "Just as our paper was going to press the Dutch mail arrived, and as we have not time to make a translation we insert the original!" The "pie" thus served up to the numerous readers of the journal occasioned no little perplexity to the linguists, and to the village politicians of the Midland Counties. No one had ever seen such Dutch, nor any other language resembling it. It was fairly an instance of an "unknown tongue," and many were the letters received from "Constant Readers," asking for an explanation of the mysterious columns, which the editor, for "want of time" and other reasons, excused himself from giving.

An informer having purchased in the printing-office of Mr. Phillips a copy of "Paine's Rights of Man," the printer, for the offence of selling it, was thrown into prison for eighteen months. The master being removed, the youth passed out of his employ, and began stocking-weaving, an occupation which was then far more remunerative than it is now. In this art he speedily excelled. Having learned all he could of the stocking trade in his native town, he travelled to Nottingham, in order to make himself master of the machinery there in use. While residing there another change in his eventful life took place. England was at the time deluged with the works of the French infidel writers written in a style adapted to captivate the mind and heart of young men. Many of these he read with avidity, and his faith in the truth and verities of the Christian religion was unsettled. At the same time the great continental war was raging, and all the resources of England in men and money were called forth against "Bonaparte." Mr.

Harris, like most young men at the time, imbibed the military spirit, and was led to join what was called the "supplemental militia." This force was stationed at different places along the south coast, to be ready in case of need to aid in repelling the threatened invasion.

After having been with his regiment in the south of England, Mr. Harris obtained a furlough of some weeks and returned to his native town. During this visit the foundation of his religious life was laid. The place of worship which his pious mother attended was that in which, afterwards, the great and gifted Robert Hall officiated. A funeral sermon was announced for the evening, and the anxious mother persuaded the sceptical son to go and hear it. He consented, and took his seat with her in the chapel. The preacher selected for his text, "A great man has fallen this day in Israel!" The announcement excited the half-suppressed laughter of the young man; for this "great man" that had fallen was a poor scissors-grinder, who by his cheerfulness and uprightness in the midst of deep poverty had won the respect of all who knew him. Quieted by the gentle rebuke of his mother, who sat by his side, he listened attentively to the preacher, who proceeded to explain the nature of true greatness, and to show how religion made men truly great, both in this world and in the next, however insignificant they might seem, when judged by the world's conventional standard of greatness. While thus listening, his levity gave way to serious reflection. He had known the poor scissors-grinder, and esteemed him for his goodness and his invariable cheerfulness under all circumstances. There must be a power and reality in religion to raise such a man in character and in happiness above all the trials of his lot; at least there *might* be, and he resolved at once to reconsider the question of the truth of Christianity. He did so, and after much reading and prayerful investigation, he renounced for ever his infidelity, and as a man would destroy the phial which contained the poison he had taken in mistake, so he burnt the books which had for a time led him astray. He became an earnest Christian, and united himself with the congregation over which Robert Hall presided, and enjoyed the ministry and the intimate friendship of that distinguished preacher until his removal from Leicester to Bristol in the year 1826.

Not long after this, apparently at the time of the peace of Amiens, Mr. Harris quitted the ranks of the militia, and retiring to his native town commenced that business career in which he eventually became so successful. When he commenced his career, the stocking-frame machine, after being long neglected and then violently opposed, had become a recognised and lawful engine of labour, but was in a rude and simple state, and his ingenious mind soon perceived that it was capable of great improvement, and of being adapted not only to the manufacture of every kind of hosiery, but of an endless variety of other articles of apparel. To the development of its capabilities he devoted his life and energies. His mind was fertile in new design, and ingenious in the alteration and adaptation of machinery to their production. His business at first was small, but year by year it increased and extended, until at the time of his death, as the result of years of skill and untiring industry, it had reached colossal proportions.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men." Success in life, earned by honourable industry, integrity, and skill, soon brings along with it office and honours. Richard Harris acquired the confidence and esteem of his fellow-citizens, and was called upon to fill

the various municipal offices. While holding that of chief magistrate, in the year 1843, he was honoured with an invitation to Belvoir Castle, where the Queen was then staying, and a distinguished party of guests. Among these was the "Iron Duke," who seemed to court the company of Mr. Harris. Both were early risers, and long before the other guests had awoken from their slumbers they might have been seen walking in the beautiful grounds of the castle, and conversing earnestly together.

There remained yet another honour to be conferred on him, the highest in the power of his native town to bestow. During a period of nearly forty years he had taken an active though not a noisy part in the politics of the times. The passing of the Registration Act, which has proved so useful to society at large, offending no man's conscience, and leaving no man's property insecure, was in a great measure due to the external pressure which he created, and the information which he supplied to Lord Nugent and other advocates of the measure in Parliament. In the year 1848 the representation of the town of Leicester became vacant, and the electors at once turned their thoughts to Mr. Harris and his friend Mr. John Ellis. They consented to become candidates, and were elected without opposition.

An election in Leicester in the year 1826 cost one candidate £60,000. The whole cost of the election of Mr. Harris and his friend, including everything, did not exceed £200.

For four years Mr. Harris discharged the duties of his responsible position in a manner satisfactory to his constituents. He retired from public life in the year 1853, and for a time enjoyed the "*otium cum dignitate*," moving quietly about in his native town, unostentatiously and in various ways doing good, respected and honoured by all who knew him. "When the eye saw him it blessed him." He passed into rest February 2nd, 1854, amidst every demonstration of respect by his fellow-citizens.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

AFTER the close of the Exhibition of 1851, many claims were urged on her Majesty's Commissioners for the disposable estate at Kensington Gore. The South Kensington Museum came in for the larger share, but a successful application was also made for ground upon which to build a great central institution for promotion of scientific and artistic knowledge as applicable to productive industry. Under this plea a site was granted, on a nominal rental of a shilling a year, for 999 years, which is estimated as a donation of £60,000. The site is on the south side of the high road to Kensington, opposite the Albert Monument. The foundation-stone was laid by her Majesty, and the hall has the prestige of being associated with the memory of the good deeds of the Prince Consort, as patron of art and industry.

The plan of the building, first designed by the late Capt. Fowke, R.E., was on his death carried out by Lieut.-Colonel Scott, R.E., and the construction is hastening toward completion, under the charge of Messrs. Lucas.

As the scheme advanced, a larger scope was announced in describing the possible uses of the edifice. To the advancement of industrial art were added various projects, combining commercial with scientific advantages, as in the case of the Crystal Palace. The estimated cost being about £200,000 rendered every extension of the original project advisable. "The hall," we

are told, "will be available for national and international congresses of science and art; for performances of music, both choral and instrumental, including performances on the organ similar to those now given in large provincial towns, such as Liverpool and Birmingham; for the distribution of prizes by public bodies and societies, conversaciones of scientific and artistic societies, agricultural and horticultural exhibitions, national and international exhibitions of works of art and industry, including industrial exhibitions by the working classes similar to those recently held with so much success in various parts of London; for exhibitions of pictures and sculpture, and for any other purposes of artistic and scientific interest."

Such is the formal catalogue of uses of the building, but practically it will chiefly be used during the London "season" for great musical performances, for flower shows, and for the evening dress conversaciones of the Society of Arts, and other corporate institutions. Subscribers of £1,000 may obtain a box to contain ten persons in the principal tier; £500 a box for five persons in the second tier; and so on, in proportion to site and accommodation, as in a theatre. The hall is designed to accommodate 8,000 persons at orchestral performances, besides the singers and musicians. Between 5,000 and 6,000 of the sittings will be available for revenue by occasional visitors, besides the permanent rents of subscribers to the boxes and stalls. The liability of subscribers is "limited," and their special places may be "conveyanced" to other occupants. The whole scheme is on a vast scale, but is of so miscellaneous a character, that some will almost regret the association with it of the name of Prince Albert, and the recollection of the Exhibition of 1851.

THE CORPS OF COMMISSIONAIRES.

In the "Leisure Hour" for June, 1866, we gave an account of the origin and early history of the Corps of Commissionaires. Established by a few benevolent individuals, with much labour and difficulty, the institution has gradually commended itself to public favour, and is now nearly self-supporting. From the last annual report of the executive committee we learn that there has been a steady increase in the number of members of the corps, as well as in the demand for their services. The report states that—

The motion submitted to the House of Commons by Sir Charles Russell, V.C., relative to the employment of soldiers and sailors in the public offices, the reception it received, and the general drift of the public feeling, are all tending to the more extensive employment of old soldiers and sailors in the public departments; and we feel satisfied that this institution may be expanded, if duly supported, so as to meet a largely increased demand with qualified and reliable men, discharged from the army and navy, to fulfil the duties that may be required from them.

With this end in view, we would most earnestly press for more extended pecuniary support from the public generally, and from both the army and navy, it being remembered that all the benefits of the institution are equally open to, and, indeed, are largely taken advantage of by, both services. It is hoped that both in her Majesty's ships and regiments general subscriptions will be entered into in support of the institution; a very small amount from individual officers will effect great results in benefiting the institution. A subscription of 5s. a year from each officer in a regiment will in two years entitle a corps to a perpetual governorship.

An opportunity having occurred of purchasing the barracks of the corps on advantageous terms, the commanding officer has acted with much promptness and decision in securing them. The advantage of this acquisition to the institution, in both a practical and financial point of view, cannot be doubted.

The purchase-money, however, has to be raised, and it is hoped that the efforts and contributions of all well-wishers to the corps will not be wanting to meet the emergency. We cannot believe that the public will allow the founder to suffer from having effected an arrangement of such manifest importance to its interests.*

We beg to call your attention to the inadequate stipend now provided for the Adjutant. If this officer does his duty by the corps, his post is a very arduous one. The present Adjutant is well qualified for the position, and zealous in the performance of his duties. It is very desirable that, if means can be provided, he should be rewarded more adequately and proportionately to the extent of his duty and his responsibilities.

With respect to the management of the corps, all persons subscribing £10 are life governors, and regiments whose united subscriptions among officers, past and present, amount to £25, are perpetual governors, having the right to nominate one of their body as a representative of their interests.

The veteran Sir John Burgoyne, one of the trustees of the Endowment Fund, has published in the "Times" the following appeal on behalf of what he terms "one of the most meritorious and practical measures for the benefit of the army and navy which has been set on foot in modern times."

No measure can be indifferent to the British public which tends to reward and add to the comforts of the retired soldier and sailor of her Majesty's service, and which, in addition, brings valuable qualities into the activity of social life instead of leaving them buried in idleness and penury.

There are many qualities peculiar to the soldier and sailor, and imbibed by him in the ordinary course of his service, which, added to good character and conduct, may render such men more eligible than others for various services in civil life. Among these may be reckoned the habit of implicit obedience to any order he receives, without reference to any especial inconvenience it may occasion him, or troubling himself by much consideration as to its import; and to this may be added a degree of fearless spirit in the performance of what is required of him, and in protecting whatever may be entrusted to his charge, which is inculcated by his profession.

There are many requirements in the business of life which render these qualifications of more value than the possession of particular ability, skill, or bodily power.

As a trustee of the institution, it has been my duty to examine the details of its administration, and I think every one conversant with the requirements of so large a body of men will admit the moderation of the expenses.

If the money required for the purchase of the existing barracks of the men—viz., £5,000—could be raised by subscription, the income of the corps would be augmented by £250 a year, and the expenses of the increased establishment would be brought within the annual interest of the investments, and thus stand upon a sound basis. For this comparatively small sum the public would be furnished with a never-failing supply of trustworthy men, to whom could be entrusted with confidence the care of valuable property, and upon whose exactitude and probity the most complete reliance could be placed. I have known cases where, during the prevalence of an epidemic, families have left premises which were infected in the sole care of one of these commissionaires, and there is not one who would hesitate to assume the charge under such circumstances. If old soldiers and sailors have their failings, they have also their virtues, and so long as such qualities as fidelity to a trust and contempt of danger are valuable to society, it is worth our while to make an effort to render permanent an institution which will place those qualities at our disposal in times of need.

The effective strength of the corps is at present about 380. It is estimated that there is permanent employment for at least 800 men in London alone.

* Subscriptions for the Endowment Fund are received by Messrs. Cocks and Co., Army Agents, Craig's Court, Charing Cross, S.W., and also by the Adjutant of the corps, Exchange Court, 419, Strand, W.C. Exclusive of the balance of the "Times" Crimean Fund, the interest of which is paid by the Charity Commissioners to the trustees of the institution, the total subscriptions of the public to the Endowment Fund of the corps from its foundation up to the present time are less than £1,800. This fund is intended for the payment of the Adjutant and requisite staff, the rent of the offices, and such other items as could not be fairly chargeable to the soldiers and sailors composing the corps.

Varieties.

FALSE HAIR.—Long hair now costs as much as 110*l.* a pound; short hair ranges between 18*l.* and 35*l.* One of the principal dealers in human tresses occupies a house five stories high entirely to himself, and last year he did business to the extent of 1,233,000*l.* The capillary *razzias* executed among the peasantry no longer suffice to meet the enormous demand. The hair of dead persons, cut off the corpses in the hospitals, is a great help, but still insufficient. So importations from abroad are had recourse to. Certain German provinces specially supply fair hair. Black hair is to be found in South America, whence whole cargoes of it come; while to North America we export immense quantities of hair made up into head-dresses. The dearest hair is the completely white.—*Paris Paper.*

SEA BEAR.—M. Le Compte was sent out this spring by the Zoological Society to the Falkland Islands for the purpose of collecting sea bears and penguins. He succeeded in capturing no less than eight sea bears, of which he shipped four in safety for England. He laid up a quantity of sea fish as provision for his animals; but one of the passengers being taken ill with a chest disease, it was imagined that there was yellow fever on board, and the doctor ordered Le Compte to throw all his fish over. The consequence was his sea bears gradually died; one only survived, and this poor beast had nothing to eat for nearly three weeks. Le Compte, however, managed to bring it safe to the gardens, where it now occupies the cage of its late relative. It is about the size of an ordinary seal, very thin, as may be imagined, but still in good health. Le Compte collected as many as sixty penguins, but brought none back alive, on account of the difficulty of procuring food during the sea transit. He informs me that there are vast numbers of penguins at the Falkland Islands; last year that no less than 405,600 were slain, skinned, and boiled down to make oil. They yielded 50,700 gallons of oil, worth 1*s.* 7*d.* per gallon, making a total of £4,119 7*s.* 6*d.* Le Compte has also brought with him an Antarctic wolf, a pair of Upland geese, and one Kelp goose (new to the Gardens), and two falcons.—*Land and Water.*

NEW ZEALAND.—Scarcely thirty years ago almost the sole occupants of New Zealand were a few English missionaries, who have generally been the pioneers of civilisation in those distant countries. Some ten years later, Lord Auckland, then at the head of the navy, foresaw that the easiest and shortest mode of success in New Zealand was a complete exploration of all its shores. This was undertaken under his auspices, and completed within seven years. During this period colonisation advanced very rapidly; and at the present time, in spite of many difficulties from native wars, the islands of New Zealand are inhabited throughout their length and breadth by Englishmen and Englishwomen, in possession of all the comforts and prosperity of an old and long-settled country.—*Captain Richards, R.N.*

SUNDAY RECREATIONS.—A paragraph having appeared in the "Times," to the effect that Baron Bramwell and Mr. Justice Lush, two of her Majesty's judges, when on circuit had spent some hours in visiting the Leeds Exhibition, Mr. Justice Lush wrote as follows:—"There is not a word of truth in the statement. I never went nor even thought of going to the Exhibition on a Sunday; and as to my colleague, Baron Bramwell, he was not in Leeds on either of the two Sundays while the assizes lasted until late at night. I should be sorry to have it supposed that any act of mine had afforded a precedent for visiting or an argument for opening places of amusement on a Sunday."

EUROPEAN EMIGRANTS.—During a recent month nearly 30,000 emigrants landed at New York from Europe. About 23,000 of them landed from steamers; about 20,000 were from German and French ports, and upwards of 26,000 of them were steerage passengers. They arrived in nearly forty ships. There were thirteen births on board the ships during the Atlantic passage. The bulk of the emigrants were from Germany and the north of Europe, which contain a population of 70,000,000, and from which there is a perpetual exodus. The chief persons engaged in this enormous passenger traffic are two German steam-packet companies, called the North German Lloyd, and the Hamburg and American companies, who will before long have a fleet of forty monster screw steamers, as large and as fast as any in the world. They are now rapidly building five gigantic steamers, at a cost of upwards of £500,000. This

fleet will form a nursery for a German navy. They have now lines to New York and Baltimore, and they will soon have one to New Orleans. These companies will monopolise all the passenger traffic between the Weser, Elbe, and Solent, and the Hudson, Chesapeake Bay, and the Mississippi. What they get for carrying mails scarcely equals what they pay to the English Trinity Board. The German steerage passengers are persons possessed of a little money, who forsake Europe for the far west, where there is perfect religious and political freedom, and a boundless territory and field for enterprise. The Germans form almost the whole population of some towns and cities in the United States. They indulge in their social and religious customs in their new home, and only change their language for the English. They are most welcome emigrants.

BUNSEN IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—As a German, what he admired and envied most was, after all, the House of Commons:—"I wish you could form an idea of what I felt. I saw for the first time *man*, the member of a true Germanic State, in his highest, his proper place, defending the highest interests of humanity with the wonderful power of speech-wrestling, but with the arm of the spirit, boldly grasping at or tenaciously holding fast power, in the presence of his fellow-citizens, submitting to the public conscience the judgment of his cause and of his own uprightness. I saw before me the empire of the world governed, and the rest of the world controlled and judged, by this assembly. I had the feeling that, had I been born in England, I would rather be dead than not sit among and speak among them. I thought of my own country and was thankful that I could thank God for being a German and being myself. But I felt, also, that we are all children on this field in comparison with the English; how much they, with their discipline of mind, body, and heart, can effect even with but moderate genius, and even with talent alone! I drank in every word from the lips of the speakers, even those I disliked."

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AUSTRALIAN GOLD COINAGE.—The quantity of sovereigns issued from the Sydney Mint averages fully 35,000 a week, or nearly 1,800,000 a year, besides from 500,000 to 1,000,000 half-sovereigns. This, to a certain extent, may account for the non-issue of sovereigns in 1867 from the Royal Mint at London. A large number of the Australian sovereigns are exported to China, India, and the islands; a few are to be met with in the ordinary circulation here. Such is the purity of the Australian gold from which these sovereigns are coined that they are considered to average two-and-a-half per cent., or from 3*d.* to 6*d.* each, more in value than Royal Mint sovereigns. A branch of the Royal Mint has also recently been established at Melbourne, which will shortly commence work, and probably to a certain extent, if not entirely, supersede that of Sydney, Melbourne being the centre round which nine-tenths of the Australian gold is produced.

THE SNUFF TOWER AT NORWICH.—This tower, of which an engraving was given on page 536, was formerly known as the Black Tower on Butler Hills. In 1625, during a time of pestilence, this tower was fitted up as a temporary hospital for the infected poor, and a keeper appointed to prevent their intercourse with the outer world. A man named Thomas Chambers was the first who filled this office, and his salary was fixed at four shillings a week. Five years afterwards the plague re-appeared with greater violence than before. An acre of land around the tower was enclosed with high boards, and six houses were built within it for pest-houses. Guards were kept at watch day and night. The tower was subsequently used as a snuff mill, whence its modern name. In July, 1833, it was struck by lightning, and the roof, which was then thatched, was completely destroyed.

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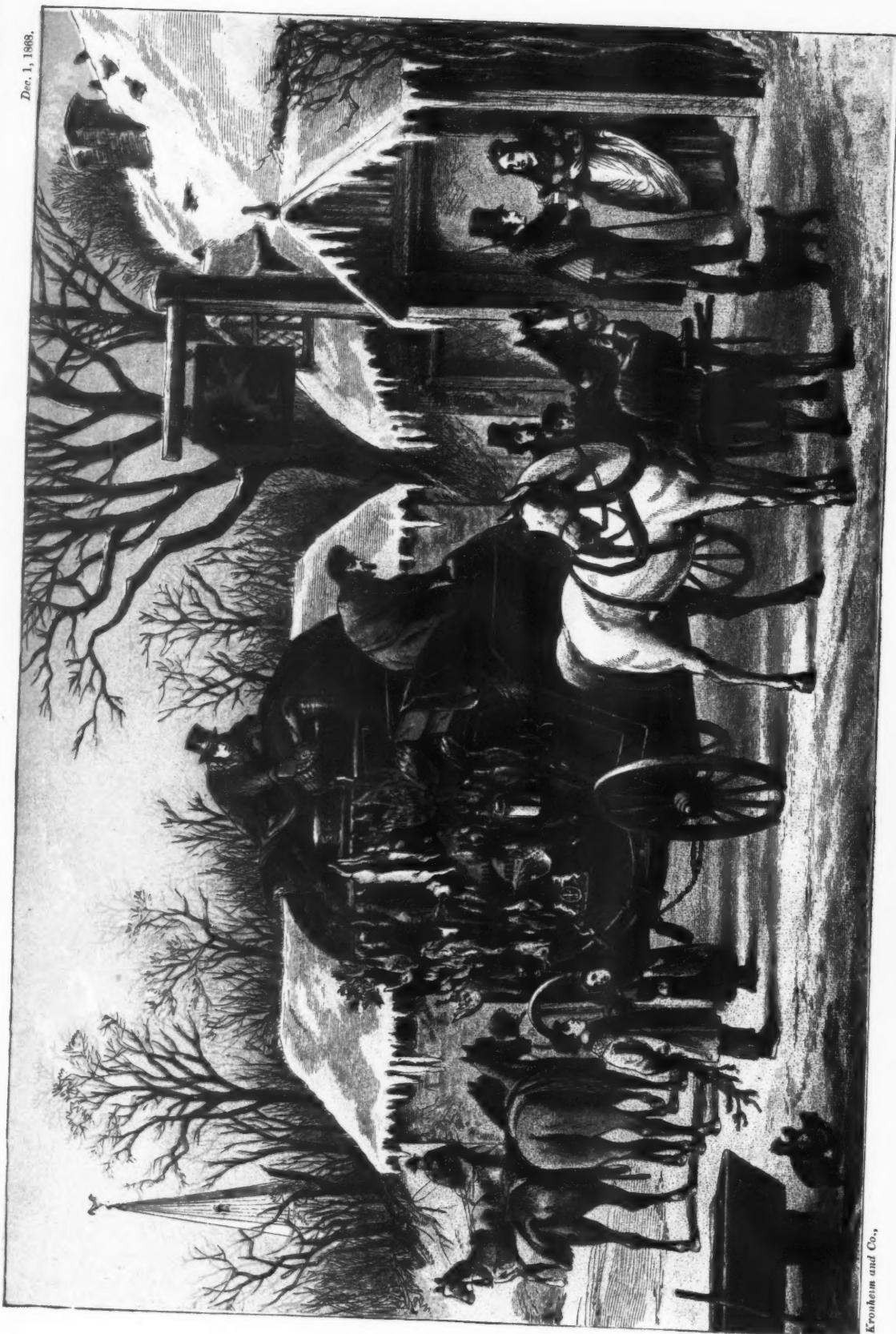
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